No Use Crying Over Spilt Milk (But What About Coffee?)
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No Use Crying Over Spilt Milk (But What About Coffee?)

by ShadeCrawler

Summary

Shouta knew from the moment that he saw his special coffee spilt all over the kitchen floor that it was going to be a bad day. If only he knew just how bad it was going to be.

Shouta knew from the moment that he found his bag of Italian coffee on the ground with the grinds spilt everywhere on the ground and Bastard staring up at him with innocent eyes that it was going to be a terrible day.

Shouta stared down at the mix of cat hair and coffee grinds spread across the kitchen floor and had to take a deep breath. If anyone was brave enough to ask, Shouta would deny any and all claims that he can be just as dramatic as Hizashi with a snarky indifference never known in UA. But when he saw Bastard, with his wide full eyes gazing up at Shouta with nothing but innocent affection, surrounded by the remains of his coffee grounds, he was sorely tempted to do something very 'extra'. Instead he took a moment to mourn the loss of his one and only soulmate before sinking into a solemn crouch, pressing his hands together against his lips in hopes of holding back the scream trying to escape. He was a pro hero, he could overcome this. He had faced those closer to demons than humans, he had taken down hundreds of thousands of villains, he could handle his coffee scattered to the four corners of the kitchen.

But why did it have to happen today?

The day of Midoriya's first lesson with Hizashi. The day right after his conversation with Yagi. T*uesday,* the one day of the week that Shouta hated more than any other day because only terrible things happened on Tuesday. On today of all days, Shouta's good coffee, the coffee that was going to get him through the day, was gone. His Italian soulmate was gone.

The coffee had been on its secret spot in the back of the top shelf of the cupboard. How the hell had Bastard found it?

Bastard let out a little thrill and hopped closer to Shouta, directly through a small pile of the coffee grinds, and gently headbutted his head against Shouta's knee. Shouta absentmindedly scratched at his ears, his other hand wrapped around his mouth in an effort to stop himself from crying. Why? Why was Tuesdays the days where things like this always happened? His good coffee was usually the only things that got him through Tuesdays and Shouta had been planning on having a large mug of it after the Monday he had had and to prepare himself for the lesson that Midoriya was going to have. As the only teacher Midoriya really trusted, he was going to be there the entire time to make sure that the Problem Child was comfortable while the lesson was going on. To stop any disasters before they

happened.. And, because it was Problem Child, Shouta knew that there were going to be at least *one* disaster. Which was why he had been planning on having *at least* two mugs of the Italian coffee today.

And now it was gone. It was all gone.

"Shouta? Babe? You got breakfast started?" Shouta didn't turn around at the sound of his husband's footsteps padding into the kitchen, just staring at the coffee grinds on the ground and absentmindedly scratching his happy, innocent kitten's fur. Which had his coffee grinds mixed into it. "*Oh.* Oh, baby, I'm so sorry." A hand landed on top of Shouta's head and Shouta let out a choked noise in the back of his throat. His poor, *poor* coffee. How it must've suffered in its final moments. "C'mon, stand on up. Go sit down on the couch and I'll clean this up."

Shouta allowed Hizashi to guide him up, still staring at the grinds spread across the kitchen tiles and mixed through Bastard's fur. He was going to need a bath, Shouta noted idly. Bastard, the cat who had truly earned his name, meowed, and brushed his head against Shouta's leg before hopping away in a dead sprint. Leaving little brown pawprints in his wake.

Hizashi let out a concerned noise and pressed a kiss to Shouta's temple. "I *knew* I'd be dealing with the tears," he sighed with a shake of his head. Shouta felt his face twist a little and forced the burning in his eyes back. He wasn't *crying.* Not over coffee. Not over the best coffee in the Goddamn world. The little bag that had helped get him through the past week of pure *shit.* Of finding out that his student had been through hell and having to try and fix everything to the best of his ability. Nope. Not happening. He wasn't crying. Nope. "C'mon, babe. Go sit down and I'll clean this up and get you a smoothie. Sound good?"

"Sure," Shouta muttered, his voice sounding numb to even himself. God, he was having a *smoothie* with his breakfast today. A fucking *smoothie*. How the hell was he going to get through the day now? Smoothies didn't have the same kick to them that coffee did. Fuck, even the cheap shit was better than smoothies. But they had run out the night before of even the cheap shit when Hizashi had made a cup for himself. And now there was no caffeine at all in their dorm apartment. "Make it the green smoothie that you made the other day. Please."

Hizashi hummed approvingly as he led Shouta to the couch. He

kept a hand on Shouta's shoulder like he knew that his husband was going to need the extra support right now. "The spinach and mango one? 'Course, Kitten. C'mon, sit down." Hizashi gently pushed his husband down and Shouta pushed down a sniffle when he cupped his face. "Oh, it's okay, Shouchan. I'll order you a fresh bag after school today. One of the bigger ones. With the little chocolates from that website too. Promise."

Shouta nodded and closed his eyes to stop the tears before they fell. He knew, he *knew* that there was nothing to be ashamed of when it came to crying. His own Papa was a man who cried freely and often. Almost as much as Problem Child, though Midoriya probably had Shouta's Papa beat there by a bit. Shouta had grown up being told by his parents that crying was healthy and completely normal. But he had also grown up with a villain's quirk and he had learnt from day one that crying would only make things worse in the long run. And that had stuck. Even now, at thirty years old and with a loving husband, Shouta found it hard to just let himself go and let out even a single tear. It was something that he had spoken to his own therapist to about several times, but Shouta still struggled with it. "Thanks, 'Zashi," he whispered. He bit down the illogical apology that tried to rise to his lips as his husband walked back to the kitchen to clean.

He wasn't an idiot. After everything that happened in the last week, all the fires that Shouta had put out, the conversation with All Might that Shouta had had just the day before, Shouta knew that his emotions were riding high. A spilt bag of coffee, even Shouta's precious bag of the Italian stuff, would normally have him simply swearing at the air for a few minutes before going to order a new bag. But after this week, hell, this entire fucking *year*, Shouta wasn't too surprised at having to push down tears. At least it was happening here in front of his husband, someone who had seen him cry multiple times over the years, instead of somewhere else. Like in the middle of a battle. Or at a staff meeting. Vlad would never let him live it down. Or, God forbid, in front of his *students.* Little demons would probably try and *comfort* him. Problem Child would give him a *hug*. Shouta's reputation would be forever ruined. "I'm gonna call my therapist today," he said shakily. "Get a meeting for some time this week."

"Probably a good idea, babe," Hizashi called from the kitchen. Shouta heard the soft whir of their blender going. "You've been going through the shit recently, haven't you? Abe-san will be happy that you're making a meeting with him though. I'm proud of you too."

Shouta huffed weakly and wiped at his eyes, his sleeve coming

away a little damp. “I’m crying at Bastard knocking over my coffee and you’re proud?”

Hizashi arched an eyebrow as he walked back into the living area with a takeaway mug. He crouched in front of Shouta and smiled teasingly. “Babe, I bawled like a baby the other day when we passed that cat café and saw that cat with only one eye. And you never say anything about Midoriya’s endless tears. You just started carrying more handkerchiefs with you. You tearing up because your *one true love*,” Shouta barely held back a snort at Hizashi’s mock jealous look,” got spilt all over is normal. Besides, crying’s fine, hon, you know this. And why shouldn’t I be proud? You’re recognizing that you need to call your therapist to help you with all your feelings and with everything that’s been happening lately.” He pressed the takeaway mug into Shouta’s hand, Shouta automatically curling his fingers around the cool metal. “I’m *so* proud of you.”

“. . . You’re turning sappy,” Shouta choked out, his lips twitching up into a small, fond smile. He tilted his head up and pressed a soft kiss to Hizashi’s cheek. “You gonna be this sappy with Problem Child today during his lesson today?”

That earned him a small chuckle from Hizashi as he carded his fingers through Shouta’s long, tangled hair. “Nah. He is pretty sensitive though, so I’ll have to be careful with him. You gonna be good to go to the lesson still? We can push it back until tomorrow, Shouchan. Or you can go back to the dorms while me and Midoriya go at it. We’re only gonna be meditating, it’s doubtful that anything will happen.”

Nope, no way. Shouta already knew that there was no way either of those things could happen. “Midoriya has his first Quirk Counseling lesson tomorrow. And there is *no way* that I’m not showing up to the first lesson. Midoriya doesn’t trust you, remember?” Shouta sighed and sipped at the smoothie. It . . . was actually not half bad. No Italian coffee but not that bad of a substitute. “I’ll be fine.” He sighed and rubbed at his eyes. “. . . You think that the world would burn if I asked Nedzu to cover my homeroom this morning?” He didn’t have anything else until third period and he was sure that he’d be presentable by then.

Hizashi actually hesitated at that which really told Shouta the dangers of what he was suggesting here. “. . . I’m sure it’d be fine. Nedzu likes teaching and your class isn’t *that* bad. Nedzu will probably just do some analysis with them or go on some tangent about

something. Do any of your kids have any skills in analysis that we know about?"

Shouta thought about it before shrugging. "Midoriya and Yaoyorozu. Midoriya especially. But we haven't done the analysis portion yet this semester so I can't say for certain *how* good at it he is. I just know from listening to him that he has a talent for it, but I don't know how good at it he is. Good enough that Nedzu will like talking to him about it. Guess we'll just have to see." He dug his phone out of his pocket and leaned around Hizashi to snap a picture of the mess of coffee grins on the floor before sending it to Nedzu. He sent a very blunt text to his mentor. [Bastard destroyed my coffee. Can you cover my homeroom today, Nedzu-san?] He knew that the rat would understand the pure devastation of this event.

And just like he suspected, Nedzu texted him back just a few seconds later. [Oh, how terrible! I'm so sorry about this unlucky turn of events, Shouta-kun! Luckily, I find myself with nothing to do this lovely morning, so I am free to cover your homeroom today. Take the morning off and then come meet me for lunch. I'll have one of the others cover your third period class. Have some extra rest, please. I'll be very displeased if you don't. :)]

A smiley face should *not* feel so full of care but also so threatening.

Hizashi shivered when Shouta showed him the text message. "Well, that's terrifying. Guess your kids are in for it this morning." He shrugged. "Well, a little trauma is good every now and then."

"It keeps them on their toes," Shouta agreed with a solemn nod. He chuckled and stood up, wiping at his eyes weakly. "Text me if one of my kids try and burn the school down."

Hizashi arched an eyebrow with a small grin as he straightened and rolled his shoulders. "If I remember correctly, I recently got one of the kids more likely to burn the school to the ground. And Todoroki doesn't seem like the kind to burn down a building on a whim."

Shouta rolled his eyes. "Don't judge a book by its cover. Todoroki would do it in a heartbeat if Midoriya showed even the slightest want for it. And any one of my kids could do it even without their quirks. Their quirks just add more risk to it." He pressed a kiss to Hizashi's cheek, pulling him closer with his free hand. Hizashi hummed and wrapped an arm around Shouta's shoulder. "I'm just

going to take a nap, ‘Zashi. I’ll see you after lunch.”

“Get some rest, Kitten. I’ll finish cleaning up and I’ll order a new bag of your Love before I head out.” Hizashi smiled softly and cupped Shouta’s face. “Don’t give up on the day yet, Hon. It might get better from here.”

For some reason, Shouta *really* doubted that.

Shouta had seen many terrifying things in his life.

Human Trafficking rings, numerous villain attacks, so many different things that Shouta pushed to the back of his mind so he didn’t need to think about them every day. He was an Underground hero so there were many terrible things that he’s seen that most Limelight heroes never would. Terrible things were kind of Shouta’s bed and butter if he was being honest.

But out of all the terrible, terrifying things that Shouta had seen over the years, walking into Nedzu’s office, and seeing him and Midoriya having tea with a sharp, wide smile stretched across Nedzu’s face was up high on the list.

Shouta paused in the doorway, trying hard to make his brain catch up with what he was seeing in front of him. He had managed to get a couple extra hours sleep but his brain was still moving at 50%. Midoriya was sitting on one of the nice couches that Nedzu kept in his office with the notebook that Shouta had seen him writing in from time to time in his lap. The kid was almost vibrating out of the couch with how excited he was. It was only then that Shouta realized that Midoriya was rambling, stumbling over words in his excitement, and he forced himself to listen to what he was saying.

“ – Her quirk is r-really impressive and there are so many different, different things that she might be able to do with it! Uraraka-chan is s-so smart with it but I think that her quirk counsellor might’ve mis-misidentified the quirk itself ‘cause it doesn’t *seem* like she’s cancelling gravity but more, more like she’s manipulating it! Like, in her fight with Kacchan at, at the S-sports Festival! If she ca-cancelled the rubble’s gravity then it would’ve, would’ve floated away instead of just a-above the field!”

Nedzu clapped his paws, his tail swishing behind him happily. Oh God, Shouta realized distantly. The rat was enjoying this. He

hadn't seen Nedzu this excited since he had taken Shouta on as a personal student in his first year. *Oh God.* "An excellent point, Midoriya-kun! So, you believe there are more possibilities to her quirk then how she's been using it up until now?"

Midoriya nodded eagerly. His eyes were wide and Shouta could practically see stars in them at someone actively encouraging him. "Y-yeah! If I'm right and it's gravity, gravity m-manipulation then there's so, so many things she c-could do! She would p-potentially *add* gravity to things instead of just taking, taking it away. A-and I know that, that doesn't s-seem like much but it c-could be so useful! L-like, she could de-detain a villain in a fight by just touching them and forcing them, them to the ground!" He cupped his chin in his hand and hummed thoughtfully. "I-I wonder if she could po-potentially make a black hole like Thirteen-sensei. Since a b-black hole is just a spot w-where gravity is so strong th-that it sucks, sucks everything in."

"Oh, that *is* an interesting thought! I'm quite impressed, Midoriya-kun." Nedzu reached forward from where he was sitting across from Midoriya and pushed a small plate with a small sandwich and little cookies stacked next to it towards the boy. "Your analysis skills are astonishing, I must say." His ears twitched in the direction of Shouta and the fucking rat grinned as he turned to him. "Aizawa-kun. I'm glad to see you well rested."

Shouta slowly blinked as Midoriya squeaked in surprise and jumped in his seat. What the fuck was happening this Tuesday? ". . . The extra sleep was helpful," he said slowly, closing the door behind him. Normally he'd already be sitting down and enjoying a nice cup of tea with his mentor. Probably talking shit about some idiotic hero too. He was one of the few people that Nedzu ever invited to have lunch with him so finding someone else here at lunch time was just odd. "Thank you for covering my morning classes." He inclined his head to Midoriya, hoping that his student wouldn't be able to see his brain rebooting. "Problem Child."

Midoriya grinned at him, an embarrassed flush crawling up his cheeks. "H-hi, sensei." His lips twitched down into a concerned frown. "Are you okay, Aizawa-sensei? We were all worried when you didn't show up to homeroom."

"It's fine," Shouta grunted. He paused before deciding to just roll with it. He had a feeling on what was about to happen, and he might as well just accept it. Something told him that he wasn't going to be the only personal student of Nedzu for very long. Shouta trudged over

to the couch and sat down next to Midoriya. Nedzu was already filling up a new cup full of Shouta's favourite tea. A chocolate blend. "There was an incident that I needed to take care of. Nothing to worry about, Problem Child." No way was he admitting to his student that he had a breakdown over his *Husband's* little bastard of a cat spilling his special coffee everywhere.

Nedzu grinned at Midoriya, his sharp and slightly deranged grin having disappeared and changed into a more child friendly smile. Hiding most of the dangerous intelligence behind it. Midoriya, no doubt, could see through it but Shouta knew as well as his mentor that most reacted better to the attempt of hiding it. "Thank you so much for sharing your morning with me, Midoriya-kun," he chirped, drawing the student's attention away from Shouta and back to him. "Though I am sorry that I stole you from your morning classes."

Shouta arched an eyebrow incredulously at Midoriya. "Have the two of you been talking the entire morning?" His answer was a sheepish smile and a shrug.

"Oh, don't blame Midoriya-kun! I did insist, I admit. We had such a pleasant conversation in homeroom about Best Jeanist's quirk that I wanted to continue the conversation in my office. Before I knew it, you were walking through the door for lunch." Nedzu grinned at him, completely unrepentant too. "You should've told me about Midoriya-kun's skill in analysis. I would've spoken to him about it ages ago."

"I didn't know how impressive his skill was," Shouta said truthfully. "I would've sent him to you sooner if I had." He really would've, no matter how many people would argue that it would be the worst idea in the world. Being Nedzu's personal student had done wonders for Shouta. Really helped him blossom into the dangerous piece of shit that he always had the potential to be. Just because the rat was a *little* crazy didn't mean that he wasn't a good teacher.

Midoriya ducked his head shyly. "It's just a dumb hobby, sensei."

Nedzu tsked disapprovingly and shook his head. "I happen to disagree. Your *hobby* is something I'd like for you to indulge in more often." He grinned and clapped his paws together. "Why don't you come back on Saturday after your lesson with Aizawa-kun and the two of us can discuss the theories you had about your sensei's quirk?"

Oh God, they were talking about *him*.

"Is that okay," Midoriya asked shyly, glancing at Shouta nervously. "People say that it's creepy and I d-don't want Aizawa-sensei to," he trailed off. To what? To be uncomfortable? To think that his special talent, something that Nedzu had spent years teaching Aizawa to just have a *tenth* of Midoriya's obviously natural talent, was creepy? Something to condemn?

Shouta rolled his eyes. "Kid, I work for Nedzu. I'm fine with my quirk being talked about." If he wasn't, he probably would've left Yuuei years ago. Nedzu picked apart his subordinates' quirks regularly and with great enjoyment. It was just something you had to get used to. "Besides, analysis is a good ability to have. You'd be smart to nurture that talent." He snatched one of the cookies off of Midoriya's plate and started to nibble on it. Mmmmm, double chocolate cherry cookies. Yum.

Midoriya smiled shyly and nodded. "Okay then. I guess I'll be back on Saturday, Nedzu-sensei."

"Excellent! I'll be sure to have that strawberry blend of tea that you mentioned that you like. For now, I believe that I'd kept you from your friends far too long." Nedzu smiled at the boy. "Take your sandwich when you go, Midoriya-kun. I'd hate for you to go hungry." That was a thing with Nedzu, if Shouta was being honest. If he had one yen for every time Nedzu shoved food into his hands, both as a student and teacher, he'd be the richest man on earth. The rat openly admitted that it might have something to do with his past and not always knowing if he'd be able to eat each day and what.

Midoriya nodded quickly, grabbing the sandwich and remaining cookie off the plate as he stood up. He bowed, his curly hair bouncing as he did so. "Thank you for lunch, Nedzu-sensei. And for analysing with me. It was really fun! Most people find it a bit creepy, so it was nice to just talk."

Dammit, Shouta really fucking wished that he had met Midoriya before Yagi. He and Nedzu would've helped him onto the path of the first quirkless hero and caused so much chaos while doing it. It would've been *beautiful*. Oh well. They'd just have to settle for the kid using his super overpowered quirk to force the world into a societal change. Something told Shouta that they wouldn't have to force the kid to do that. Or even nudge him in that direction. Problem Child would just do it on his own. They just had to gently guide him on how

to do it the right way.

"I imagine that it is only creepy, as you say, to those that aren't intelligent enough to truly understand the treasure trove of information you have at your disposal. After all, many people call myself strange and disturbing because of my intelligence," Nedzu pointed out as he sipped at his tea. "People can often be cruel to those of us with gifts that they don't understand. Unintentionally at times. Intentionally at others. But it is up to us to remember that our gift is just that. A *gift*. I look forward to speaking more to you, Midoriya-kun. Something tells me that your gift is something special."

There was a sheen to Midoriya's eyes, Shouta noted, as he grinned at the rat. He bowed again to both of the teachers before turning to leave.

"Oh, before you go!" Nedzu smiled at him and held out a paw when Midoriya quickly turned back around. "Would I be able to borrow your delightful notebook? You'd get it back tomorrow; I promise you that. I'd just like to peruse it if you don't mind. I do like your theories, after all."

Midoriya hesitated, holding his notebook a little closer against his chest like he was worried it was about to be destroyed if he let it go. And maybe a part of him was? Shouta could only imagine how most kids were fare towards a quirkless child with the gift of analysing quirks. How many times had Midoriya had one of his notebooks destroyed? How many theories had been lost to the world because some little snot nosed brat found Midoriya's God given gift "*creepy"?*

But, after a long moment of hesitation, Midoriya slowly nodded and handed over the notebook. "It's written in a code, Nedzu-sensei. I could give you the cypher?"

"Oh, no need for that! I do love a challenge," Nedzu chirped, delight practically oozing from every pore of his body as he took the notebook from the Problem Child. Yep. Shouta was *definitely* looking at Nedzu's new personal student right here. "Thank you very much, Midoriya-kun. I'll have your sensei return this to you tomorrow. Please, have a pleasant day."

"You too, Nedzu-sensei! And you, Aizawa-sensei!"

Shouta murmured a soft, "See you later, Problem Child," under his breath as Midoriya left the office and as soon as the door was

closed, arched an eyebrow at Nedzu and sipped at his tea pointedly. “You stealing one of my students?”

“Oh, most definitely,” Nedzu chirped, baring his teeth in a wide, animalistic grin. “Midoriya-kun really is full of potential, isn’t he? I asked your class the question of what I was when I first got there this morning. Just a fun little question to get their minds active. I never expected for Midoriya-kun’s hand to shoot up in the air and tell me the three exact animals that I am a hybrid of. A pleasant surprise instead!” He clapped his paws together. “What an amazing hero he’s going to be!”

“He’s going to force society into a change so drastic that I wouldn’t be surprised if some tried doing whatever they can to shut him up,” Shouta grunted. It really wouldn’t. People always did hate those with ideas that changed their ways. Nedzu had survived many ‘*accidents’* when some of his ideas had been brought to the general public. So had many others that didn’t have the luxury of burying their heads in the sand and ignoring what was going on around them. Being the change in the world was often necessary but it was never easy. Never safe.

Nedzu sighed and nodded. “Sadly, I believe the same. However, I truly doubt they’ll succeed. Especially with the two of us to guide him along the way.” He sipped at his tea and gave a dismissive flick of his tail. “But how are you doing, Shouta-kun? I know that it’s been a difficult time lately and while I’m sad that you had an adverse reaction today to your coffee being destroyed, terribly sorry about that, I’m not surprised. Are you doing better?”

“Already texted my therapist,” Shouta answered, leaning back against the couch. “I got an appointment for Saturday at three, so I’d keep an eye on the 1-A dorms around then if I were you. I’ll only be gone an hour or two but who the hell knows what my little demons could do in that time. Probably overturn the Government. I know that Problem Child in particular has it out for the Hero Commission. Don’t know why though.” He had noticed the boy glaring at the TV whenever they came up. It was rare that anyone that hadn’t tangled with them before knew just how terrible they could be. And, while it was smart of Midoriya to be aware of it, Shouta couldn’t help but wonder what the kid knew that caused so much hatred. What dirty little secret had Problem Child stumbled upon? “Might want to talk to him there before he makes a plan on tearing it the ground. Or at least teach him how to do it in a way that doesn’t end with him mysteriously disappearing one day.”

Nedzu hummed thoughtfully. “It would be nice to have another ally in my corner on that front. Perhaps I’ll be able to speed up my own plan on dealing with them.” He tapped his paw against the rim of his teacup thoughtfully. “It would be nice to finally be able to make moves without the Commission there breathing down our necks. But let us move away from that for now. You spoke to Yagi-kun yesterday about One for All?”

Shouta nodded, scowling a little at the thought of yesterday’s conversation with the blond doofus. Yagi had made himself scare after they had returned to campus and Shouta hadn’t done anything to seek him out yet. They were going to have to talk eventually but Shouta wasn’t in the mood to talk to him just yet. “I did. I made the decision that he won’t be allowed with any of the 1-A kids alone anymore and I’ll be urging for Vlad to do the same with 1-B. He said things to Midoriya in the past that, I believe, seriously impacted his mental health. While I won’t get too much into it, I will say that he left Midoriya on a rooftop after telling him that his dreams were unrealistic and to give up on them. I don’t think I need to tell you the possibilities of what could’ve happened.”

Nedzu’s face darkened. “Ah. No, you don’t.”

“I don’t think that Yagi-san is a bad man and said what he said maliciously. But I do think he’s a naïve idiot who did something that could’ve ended with one of my students being hurt.” Or killed. The thought of what could’ve happened that night still made Shouta shiver. Especially the worst-case scenario. Of waking up the day after the sludge villain and reading on his phone about a Quirkless child, he would’ve been *thirteen,* who jumped off a rooftop. The media probably wouldn’t even had named him. They’d just say that a random Quirkless kid had committed suicide and then immediately brush it under the rug. Shouta never would’ve met this kid with so much potential that he had more of it in his double-jointed pinky toe than most of past Shouta’s students had in their entire bodies. “He regrets it now, but I can’t risk my students.”

“Of course not. I’ll speak to Vlad about this new rule. And Yagi-kun about the differences of how Quirkless people were treated when he was a boy and now. Not that they weren’t treated terribly back then as well but they were more common than they are today.” Nedzu hummed and set his teacup down on its saucer. “It is truly awful how they are treated in today’s society. As if they are lesser evolved then the rest of society simply for being something that humans were for . . . many hundreds of years. Quirks are a mere blip when compared to

the hundreds of years that humanity spent without them." Nedzu sighed and shook his head mournfully. "Nevertheless, I agree with this new rule."

"Good. But, yeah, I spoke to him about the Quirk. And he turns out that he knows fuck all about it." Shouta sighed in frustration. "I'll be sitting in on the first few lessons that Midoriya's having with Hizashi in case something happens. Who knows what might be lying underneath the surface." Shouta honestly wasn't sure if he'd be surprised by anything at this point.

Nedzu hummed thoughtfully. "I'm afraid that I know just as much as you on this subject. I'll be sure to look into the past holders, however. I'm sure that we can discover something that could help Midoriya-kun." He nodded pointedly to a plate on the table with little sandwiches stacked on top. "Eat, Shouta-kun. You're far too thin."

Shouta rolled his eyes but took a sandwich. "I'll keep you updated on anything we learn in the lessons."

"Please do. I'm sure that they'll be fascinating."

"I want to start heroics training again."

Shouta looked up from his stack of paper with an arched eyebrow, meeting the eyes of one Bakugou Katsuki, who had just barged into his office, evenly. He was in his office and making the most of his free period by going through all of the paperwork that had piled up in the past few days. Unlike Hizashi, who did his paperwork religiously and in a timely manner, Shouta liked to have his pile up a bit and then do it all in one go. It was easier for him that way. But, normally, he had at least one mug of coffee to help him get through it. But there was no coffee in the school. Fucking *none.* Apparently, Thirteen had accidentally knocked the can of it over when they were turning, misjudging the bulkiness of their suit. And Shouta couldn't even be mad at them for it because of how remorseful they were about it. More remorseful than Hizashi's Bastard of a cat anyway.

So, instead of a mugful of coffee to help him get through the rest of the day, Shouta was sipping at yet another smoothie. A strawberry and honey one this time. Yum.

Shouta slurped at his smoothie, loudly and obnoxiously, before turning back down at his paperwork. "No."

“Fucking-“ Shouta glanced up when Bakugou suddenly cut himself off in the middle of a scream. The teen was glaring him down and clenching his hands tightly, but he took a deep before continuing in a tense, angry, but tenuously controlled tone. “The quirk control lessons are bullshit. I’m not going to learn anything there.”

“You refused to participate yesterday,” Shouta pointed out, signing his name at the bottom of a request form for Iida, Todoroki, Uraraka, Shinsou, and Midoriya to go off to the movies on Friday night. They should be fine. The five of them were going together and four of them had plenty of, regrettable, experience with villain attacks. And he had confident that Shinsou would be able to handle himself if one happened. Not that any were necessarily going to happen but . . . well . . . *Problem Child* was going to be there. Maybe Shouta should urge some of the older students to go to the movies on Friday, just in case. Amajiki and Togata usually went to the movies on Saturdays, but it wouldn’t take much pushing to get them to go on Friday instead. “So, you don’t know whether or not you’d learn something. Also, you’re not cleared for heroics lessons.”

Bakugou clenched his jaw and gritted out, “Why do I need to be cleared? I’ve done hundreds of the fucking exercises and it’s been fine-“

“Did you know I wasn’t there to watch your final term exam?”

Bakugou blinked at the sudden change in subject. “What?”

Shouta set his pen down and stared up at Bakugou calmly. “I had to leave immediately after Todoroki and Yaoyorozu’s examination because of an issue with a case I was working on. I was assured by All Might that the two of you passed and worked well together. And I believed him.” Shouta wouldn’t be making *that* mistake again. “But after all of this came to light, I decided to look over the tape myself. And I can assure you, if I had been there to see you punch Midoriya in the face for attempting to work with you then the examination would have immediately been stopped and you would’ve failed right then and there.”

Bakugou’s eyes widened a little before he quickly looked away, one of his hands smoking a little. “I . . . I didn’t need his fucking help to win.” His words were weak, like not even Bakugou believed them. He had a look in his eyes, like he was still trying to make sense of certain things. “The fucker was . . . annoying me.”

“So, you *punched* him,” Shouta said dryly, arching an eyebrow. “That exam was based off of your weaknesses. For Midoriya, it was to get him to be a little more assertive. He’s a smart kid but often anxious about taking charge. For you? It was to get you to work with others. Something that we stress in the Heroics classes every day. And you assaulted him for attempting to do just that.”

The harshness of the word *assaulted* actually cased a small flinch from Bakugou, a small tick in his jaw. “It wasn’t . . .” Bakugou clenched his jaw. He was staring at the wall above Shouta’s head like that would hold all of the answers to his problems. “. . . You would’ve failed me right there?”

Shouta nodded firmly. “Yes. You would’ve received a failing grade, suspended for a week, and, most likely, wouldn’t have been allowed to go on the training camp at all. Midoriya’s exam would’ve gone differently since he would have been fighting alone. I would’ve had him fight myself, most likely, instead of All Might.”

It was actually the original plan. Aizawa wanted him and Yaoyorozu fighting against him and Todoroki and Bakugou fighting against All Might. He wanted Midoriya and Yaoyorozu to work through their self-confidence together, since they both have the same tendency to lift up others. Meanwhile, Todoroki and Bakugou needed to learn to work with others and putting them together would’ve helped with that. But Nedzu was the one who vetoed that idea and put Bakugou and Midoriya on a team together. He said that with their rivalry, it made sense to put them together.

So Midoriya had been paired up with his bully and promptly assaulted.

Aizawa couldn’t put into words the rage he had felt when watching the tape of their final exam. Midoriya had attempted to do what the exam had asked of them, attempted to put a plan together. Running away may not had been the idea that Bakugou had wanted to hear but it was one that Aizawa approved of. In a situation where you’re faced with a much more powerful opponent, there was nothing cowardly about running away. He had run away plenty of times with his tail tucked between his legs and was alive today because of that fact. There were situations where you couldn’t, specifically when lives were at risk, but in those where the only thing at risk, besides your life, was your pride? Throw it right out the window before quickly diving out after it.

Running away from All Might? The Number One Hero? Aizawa would've been the first to suggest running away as fast as fucking possible.

There had been ways for them to have won that didn't include running, Aizawa had created several ways that they could've won. But running away was a perfectly acceptable one and one that Aizawa would've accepted without question. But essentially throwing a temper tantrum because you heard something that you didn't like to hear? If Shouta had been there, he probably would've started thinking about expulsion from the heroics course right then and there.

"So, no, you're not cleared for training," Shouta said blandly, picking his pen back up and turning back to the paperwork. He heard a growl but carefully didn't react to it, just signing his signature on a request form from Kouda to visit his family for the weekend. Hmmmm, maybe the shy teen would take pictures of the kittens at his family animal shelter if Shouta asked nicely. "Now, is there something about Law and Ethics that I can help you with? Because that is the only class you're in that I teach."

There was a long pause where Shouta briefly thought that Bakugou had actually left. But, finally, Bakugou muttered out, "I don't understand why everyone fucking cares so much about Deku. Like, he has a quirk now so obviously you'd care if something happened *now*. But you care about what happened when he *didn't."* There was the sound of a deep, frustrated breath being let out. "All the other teachers we had didn't care. Fuck, some of them agreed with us. So why the fuck do you?"

Ah. Now this was a question that he could answer. Shouta placed his pen to the side and leaned back in his chair, stapling his fingers together as he stared up at the lost, frustrated kid. "Because he is a person," he said simply. "Quirks shouldn't play into it. They *didn't* play into it for hundreds of years. You've equated worth into having a strong quirk and that is not only wrong but quirkest." Shouta pushed a strand of hair out of his eyes. "For those of us that don't have powerful, flashy quirks, that mindset is something that puts us at risk. Quirkless people especially." He paused before deciding to be a blunt. "To be honest, Midoriya is lucky to be alive right now. 25% of the Quirkless population dies before the age of twenty and 15% before the age of fifth teen. Whether that be from suicide, hate crimes, hospitals refusing to treat them," he trailed off when Bakugou's face paled several shades. "Yes?"

“Deku, Deku wouldn’t,” Bakugou swallowed and clenched his hands into white knuckled fists, “Deku wouldn’t have jumped. He wouldn’t. He *didn’t.*”

. . . Shouta never said the word jump.

Shouta narrowed his eyes at the phrasing but continued on, filing that away to think on later. “He didn’t. But he could’ve. I know that your classmates suicide baited him several times but I’m not ignorant enough to think that those were the only times. They were just the only times that were caught on camera.” Shouta sighed. “Midoriya is a child that experienced discrimination for ten years of his life from people that should’ve been caring for.” He stood up and walked over to his bookcase, grabbing a small book from it. It was barely two hundred pages. “Yamada says that you’re good at English. I’m assigning you reading. This is book from Canada with stories from several Quirkless people’s lives. Different country but same issues.” Canada also had a lesser percentage of Quirkless people than the rest of the world. “Read the stories, *stories that actually happened,* and think on them.” He offered the book to Bakugou who just stared at it nervously. Like he was afraid of what he was going to read in it. “You say that you want to be a hero. These are the people that often need heroes the most but never get them.”

Bakugou paused before slowly taking the book. He fiddled with it, staring down at it with an unreadable expression. He opened his mouth like he was going to say something but snapped it shut before any words could escape. Bakugou abruptly turned on his heel and almost scrambled out of the office, slamming the door shut behind him.

Shouta sighed and turned back to the bookcase, looking over it with a careful eye. The book that he had given Bakugou wasn’t the only piece of literature he had on the Quirkless population. He had several books on the discrimination they faced along with several true stories about them. There were even books of fiction in there but with facts from real life. There were also books outlining the struggles that people with mutation quirks, weak quirks, late blooming quirks, and villainous quirks faced. They took up one shelf on his bookcase, amongst the books on philosophy, ethics, and various laws. But they were *important*. Not just to Shouta who had started buying them when he was twelve and still had the vivid memory of Sakura’s broken leg burned into his mind.

He had had several students wander in in the past to borrow

from his little collection. There were books in the library, of course, but Shouta had spent years looking for these rare books that had barely gotten published. These weren't formal books lined with statistics, though they certainly had many of them in there. These were *personal.* Tokoyami came in every so often to sit on his couch and read the book written by a woman with a mutation quirk not unlike his own and Shinsou was practically a fixture in his office reading the large tome about the life of a woman with a mental quirk that was similar to his. To children who had nothing, these books were often everything.

Maybe he should tell Midoriya about these books. Something told him that the boy could use stories about people like him.

Shouta leaned against the door of Gym Eta, staring up at the sky as he waited for his Problem Child to make his way down from his last lesson of the day. Hizashi was leaning next to him, tapping away at his phone with a small smile on his face. Knowing his husband, Hizashi was probably arranging a new guest on his radio show or something like that. ". . . I should probably warn you that all of you are doomed, by the way."

There was a long pause before Hizashi slowly turned from his phone to Shouta. He blinked slowly before asking, "What do you mean?"

"Nedzu is planning on taking Midoriya as his personal student." Was he a bad husband, Shouta wondered, to enjoy the gleam of terror that flooded Hizashi's eyes in that moment? Probably. "You can relax. Nedzu isn't that bad."

"Kitten, I love you. You know that. But you only think that Nedzu isn't that bad because *you* were his personal student at one point." Hizashi groaned and rubbed at his eyes. "He's going to turn sweet Midoriya terrifying, I just know it."

Shouta didn't fight the grin that grew on his face. "Probably. It'll be fine." He ignored the groan of despair coming from his husband and straightened up once he saw the little bob of green hair sprinting towards them. "Midoriya. Good, you're here. We can get started."

Hizashi immediately wiped the frown off his face and smiled at the kid who smiled back nervously and, not so subtly, shifted a little towards Shouta. He *knew* being here was a good idea. "Hey, kiddo,

good to see you."

"H-hi, Yamada-sensei," Midoriya said with a nervous nod. He pulled at his fingers anxiously but seemed to calm down a little when Shouta put a hand on his shoulder to guide him into the gym. "Thank you for agreeing to help me."

"It's my job, kiddo! Plus, I can't wait to see what's up with that quirk of yours." Hizashi bounced in front of them, eyes sparkling behind his glasses. Shouta had to bite back a fond smile at the look on his husband's face. "But we're gonna be going easy today, you dig? Nothing too hard, just some simple meditation and then you can head on back to the dorms to hang out with your friends. We'll get into the harder stuff later on, once you get used to it."

Shouta followed Hizashi out to where he had set up some mats in a small circle and gently pushed Midoriya to sit on one. He pulled his capture scarf off and threw if towards a wall before flopping down on his own, a nice black one that Hizashi had brought him years ago, and sighing as he cracked his back. Meditation was right up there with sleep and Italian coffee on the list of things that Shouta loved. Hizashi had taught him how to do when they were kids. It had been surprising that Yamada Hizashi, the most energetic person that probably had ever existed on earth, meditated each morning before starting the day but it made sense when Shouta thought about it. Hizashi's quirk was one of the most dangerous quirks there were, and it took careful concentration to be able to use it without causing harm to those around him. Hizashi meditated religiously to keep it in check. His concentration and focus were something that Shouta envied.

Hizashi sat next to him and smiled at Midoriya. "Alright, so, I'm gonna help you through guided meditation."

Midoriya nodded thoughtfully, sitting down on his mat. "Okay. But, um, how does mediation help, Yamada-sensei? I don't really understand."

"It's actually super interesting! You see," Hizashi tapped his temple with a bright grin, "most incidents with quirks like ours, quirks that can hurt the user, happen cause we're focusing *too* hard. We're so worried about what's gonna happen that we get scared and nervous. And that's when accidents happen. So, meditation is to calm us down a bit. It also helps with concentration and being alert. If I had my way, every hero student would meditate each morning." He shrugged and sighed dramatically, coaxing a little giggle from Midoriya. "Alas, I am

but a General Education homeroom teacher, so I have no say on what goes on with you hero students."

Shouta rolled his eyes and closed his eyes. "You try wrangling twenty little hell spawn into meditation each morning," he muttered. He took in a deep breath and released it. God, he loved meditation. Maybe Hizashi was right after all and the day wouldn't end *too* badly. "Just close your eyes and listen to Yamada, Problem Child. Meditation can be helpful." There was also always the chance that the kid would just fall asleep in the middle of it, but he wouldn't be the first. Hell, Shouta fell asleep sometimes during meditation and he knew for a fact that Nemuri did every time she tried. Meditation was relaxing and it was hard, especially the first few times, to do it without drifting off. It'd be sometime to, very gently, tease the kid about later on. Besides, the kid could use the extra rest. "It'll give your brain a chance to reset."

"Your sensei's right on the money! So, close your eyes and focus on my voice." Hizashi's voice went a little softer and calmer. "Yeah, just like that. Take a deep breath in and deep breath out. Focus on breathing."

Shouta let Hizashi's voice wash over him as he meditated. He could hear Midoriya's quiet breathing next to him. The kid's breathing slowly relaxed and Shouta let himself relax in turn. This was going well. Maybe Shouta *should* have meditation be a regular thing in the 1-A dorms. It might even calm some of the little demons down before their classes. God only knows where they got that kind of energy at eight AM each day. One would think that there was no way that twenty teenagers wouldn't be so energetic in the early hours of the morning. Shouta knew better.

As he sunk further into the calm that was mediation, Shouta distantly thought about what had happened in the past week and how he had reacted to it. He had handled it well but maybe he should've set aside more time to process it. He couldn't help anyone if he was too overwhelmed by everything going on around him. His appointment with his therapist would help, no doubt, but maybe he should start doing meditation with Hizashi each morning. He had a feeling that things wouldn't be calming down any time soon, especially knowing about the hit that was probably out on Midoriya, so keeping his emotions in check was paramount. He might not have a quirk that would hurt anyone if he lost control and the worst that would happen was Shouta getting some dry eye. But he was in a position of authority and Shouta knew that he could look unnerving

with his quirk activated. He didn't want his students being scared or even startled of him because he lost his temper.

Shouta hummed absentmindedly, focusing on Hizashi's voice and Midoriya's breathing as he breathed. Midoriya's breathing . . . that sounded farther away than it had just a moment ago.

Shouta's eyes snapped open, and he had to stomp down the instinctive feeling to use his quirk at the sight in front of him. Mother*fucker*. Oh, you *got* to be kidding. He swallowed and set a hand on Hizashi's wrist, keeping his tone light. "Hizashi," he whispered softly, purposely using Hizashi's name to try and keep him calm, "open your eyes." He knew the moment that Hizashi's eyes opened by the hitching of his breath.

Because Midoriya, eyes still closed and breathing calmly, was floating five feet off the ground. Problem Child was flying. Problem Child had the ability to fucking *fly*.

Fucking Tuesdays.

Hizashi took a deep breath before speaking, keeping his voice light and calm. "Okay, kiddo, I want you to keep breathing." He nudged Shouta's arm and nodded pointedly towards the capture scarf laid against the wall of the gym. Shouta nodded and slowly stood up, keeping his movements silent, and padded his way towards the capture weapon. "How you feeling, Midoriya? Remember, keep your eyes closed."

"Good," Midoriya said with a soft, happy sigh. There was a small smile playing on his lips. "Light."

Shouta had to bite his lip to stop a bark of hysterical laughter from escaping him. He felt fucking *light*. He kept one eye on Midoriya as he grabbed his capture scarf, looping it around his neck carefully. He wasn't floating away, thank God. He was just floating there, five feet above the ground, with a small, calm smile on his face. What the absolute fuck was this fucking quirk? Was this a mutation of One for All or just another aspect that they didn't know about until now? It was a stockpiling quirk so maybe this was just small amounts energy that Midoriya was letting off that was letting him fly? It would make logical sense, he supposed. Or maybe it was like Uraraka's gravity cancellation - or manipulation if Midoriya was to be believed - quirk. But that wouldn't make any sense given the strength aspect of the quirk.

But whatever this was, why now? Why was it only activating now?

They were going to need to call Yagi, Shouta thought as he stepped up next to Hizashi with one hand tangled in his capture scarf in case Midoriya started to float away. The man said that he didn't know anything about this, but he *did* hold the quirk before Midoriya. Even if he thought that he knew nothing about this or this aspect of the quirk had never activated for him, there might be something small that Yagi had initially overlooked that could be important here. Even just something small that could explain what was happening and how they could handle it.

Hizashi waited for Shouta's nod before reaching up and hovering a hand above Midoriya's. "Midoriya, I don't want you to open your eyes yet. I'm going to grab your arms, okay? And *then* I want you to open your eyes."

Midoriya's eyes scrunched in confusion but he kept them closed. "Yamada-Sensei? Is something wrong?" A hint of anxiety seeped into the kid's tone and Shouta fought the urge to just cancel the quirk altogether. It would probably send Midoriya headfirst into a panic attack if he suddenly dropped five feet and fell to the ground in an undignified heap. It was already going to be difficult to keep Midoriya calm – Shouta was barely keeping calm – there was no need to panic him more than necessary.

"Nah, nothing's wrong," Hizashi said with a carefully chosen careless tone. "But there is something happening. So, I'm gonna take your arms and, when I say so, you're gonna open your eyes. Keep that breathing up, kiddo. You're doing great, Midoriya. Just keep that breathing up."

Shouta watched closely as Midoriya nodded and Hizashi carefully took a gentle but firm grip on Midoriya's upper arms. There was definitely a slight difference to the boy's breathing and Shouta could see the anxious furrow to his eyebrows. He kept floating in the air but he wasn't floating any higher so that was good. He also wasn't falling back to the ground though. "Aizawa-sensei," Midoriya called softy, his voice shaking slightly.

"I'm right here, Problem Child," Shouta said, forcing as much calm into his voice as he could. Now that Hizashi had a firm grip on Midoriya, he let go of his capture scarf and sent a text message to both Yagi and Nedzu. [Urgent. Get to Gym Eta now. Injuries are zero but

Problem Child's ignoring gravity.] He paused before pulling up Uraraka's number and sent her a text as well. [Uraraka, report to Gym Eta immediately. There is an incident happening with Midoriya that could use your expertise. Bring Todoroki with you.] Shouta tucked his phone back in his pocket and focused his attention solely on Midoriya. "You're perfectly safe, kid."

"Yeah, you're fine, kiddo. You can open your eyes now, okay?"

Midoriya's eyes cracked open and, for a moment, all Shouta could see was pure confusion. At the height that Midoriya was floating, he was almost eye level with the two men. And then reality seemed to set in and Midoriya cried out in terror, frantically grabbing onto Hizashi's arms. His legs started floating upward and in the span of one second, it was only Hizashi's tight grip onto him that kept him from floating to the ceiling. Aizawa jerked forward, ready to use his quirk, but Hizashi was already gently tugging him back down, curling one arm around his back.

"Woah, woah, there we go," Hizashi said soothingly. "You're okay, you're good. Deep breaths, okay? I'm not letting go of ya. You're fine." He glanced at Shouta and though Shouta could see a hint of confusion in his eyes, there was no panic. Hizashi dealt with things like things on the regular. A kid getting the sudden ability to fly? Unlike Shouta, Hizashi looked barely fazed. This was *Hizashi's* bread and butter. "Aizawa-sensei's right here, okay? We're gonna try and calm you down first and see if that helps bring you back down. But if it doesn't then we got our Quirk Cancelling expert here. Deep breath, kiddo." He took in a deep, exaggerated breath, gently squeezing Midoriya's arm in an encouragement to follow.

Shouta stayed close as Midoriya took in shaky breaths, ready to flip the switch on his quirk at any time. A flight quirk . . . Shouta could work with a flight quirk. It didn't look like anything else, thankfully. No fire, no tentacles exploding from his skin, no broken bones. Yeah, Shouta could definitely work with this. He carefully reached forward to where the kid was being held tightly in Hizashi's arms and placed a hand on Midoriya's shoulder. "You're doing fine, Midoriya," Shouta said evenly. "I know this is startling, but it is obviously just another aspect of your quirk." He gently squeezed the kid's shoulder, tilting his head towards the entrance of the gym when he heard the door open. "Back here," he called.

There was the sound of hurried footsteps before Yagi ran into the gym with Nedzu riding on his shoulders. Yagi's jaw dropped at the

sight in front of them, paling a few shades, while Nedzu perked up curiously. “My my, I wasn’t expecting this from your first lesson,” the rat chirped, hopping off of Yagi’s shoulder deftly and approaching them. There was a gleam in his eyes as he took Midoriya in, like he was trying to dissect the situation just with his eyes alone. “Hello again, Midoriya-kun.”

Midoriya managed a shaky smile, gripping Hizashi’s arms tightly. “H-hi, Nedzu-sensei, All Might.”

Yagi let out a choked noise from the back of his throat, staring at Midoriya like he was seeing a ghost. “I . . . My boy, how are you doing this?”

“That’s what we’re trying to figure out,” Shouta said shortly, looking away from Midoriya and setting his firmly on Yagi. Yagi flinched slightly from the hard expression on Shouta’s face. “Do you know anything about this? Anything that could help us understand what *exactly* is going on?”

Yagi swallowed and started to shake his head before pausing. “I . . . I, no. Not,” he hesitated. “Well, I-“

“Spit it out, Yagi-san,” Shouta snapped impatiently, crossing his arms across his chest.

Yagi winced. “Well, ah, I was never able to access anything other than enhanced strength. However, my Master, Nana, she said once about something odd.” He hesitated, glancing at Hizashi. “Ah, perhaps we should talk about this privately.”

Shouta gritted his teeth irritably, but Hizashi was already talking, rolling his eyes dismissively. “I *know*, remember? Now mind telling us what your teach told you? Cause I’m kind gonna need to know if I’m gonna help.” He adjusted his grip on Midoriya into a more comfortable position.

“Now,” Shouta said shortly. “Uraraka is on her way to help get Midoriya back on solid ground, so I’d suggest speaking quickly, Yagi-san.”

Yagi winced but nodded. “She spoke once about how her Master claimed that he could use the quirk of *his* Master.”

There was a long pause where no one said anything. Shouta stared at Yagi, exhaustion and annoyance flooding him.

Goddammit.

God. Fucking. Dammit.

Shouta fought the urge to groan and bury his face in his hands. This was fucking unbelievable. Just why weren't they told about this earlier? Why the *fuck* were they only hearing about this now? Even if All Might thought that the chance of this happening was minuscule they still should've been told. They could've gone into this lesson with the knowledge that something like this could possibly happen and have safety measures put into place. Hell, Shouta would've started looking into the previous users of One for All immediately to find out their quirks.

Wait. . . Did this mean that Midoriya was going to have *seven fucking quirks? Motherfucker.*

But, surprisingly, it wasn't him who said anything about this turn of events. Not that he didn't have anything to say. No, Shouta had *plenty* to fucking say. No, it was Midoriya who spoke up. "W-why didn't you warn me," Midoriya demanded shakily, tears of frustration welling in his eyes. He twisted as much as he could in Hizashi's arms, leveling All Might with an accusatory, betrayed, teary glare. The retired number one hero froze at the look on his protégé's face. "Why didn't you tell me? Why do you keep *hiding* things from me?!"

Yagi seemed to shrink back, being crushed under the force of Midoriya's anger and disappointed tears. "I-I didn't think it was important! My Master was never able to access the quirks, and neither was I."

Midoriya scowled, tears leaking from his eyes. Suddenly, Shouta remembered that he wasn't the only one who had been going through the shit in the past week. He knew, of course, that Midoriya had plenty of stress piled on his tiny shoulders. But this was the final straw that finally broke the camel's back. Honestly, Shouta was kind of surprised that Midoriya hadn't started crying and screaming from frustration earlier. "But her Master could so there was a chance that I could too! Why don't you ever tell me anything!?"

"My boy-"

"Hey now, let's all take a deep breath," Hizashi cut in, running a hand up and down Midoriya's back soothingly. He kept his voice even and steady, not betraying a hint of how he was really feeling. "Now isn't the time for this talk, I don't think. Midoriya, kiddo, I know

you're angry. I can't blame you there. I'd be angry too if I was in your spot. But right now, let's focus on getting your feet back on the ground, okay? Deep breaths."

Midoriya screwed his face up in frustration but, thankfully, nodded. He awkwardly wiped his face with his sleeve before whispering out shakily, "W-what kind of quirk is this?"

Anguish was written across every line of Yagi's face and when he answered, every word was lined with grief. "I . . . My Master's quirk. It's called Float. She was able to use the quirk to fly. Quite well, in fact." Yagi rubbed the back of his neck awkwardly. "I, uh, remember her saying that her quirk was related to her letting go. Of her worries, I suppose."

"Great," Shouta drawled, a small part of his mind already thinking about how best to incorporate this *new fucking quirk* into lessons plans. Problem Child could now ignore gravity. As if him and Uraraka weren't already a force to be reckoned with when paired up together. They were going to be near to impossible to beat now. "Any idea on how she managed to *stop* floating?"

". . . No. I don't."

. . . Of all the fucking days not to have any coffee. *Fucking Tuesdays.*

Hizashi sighed and shook his head. "Well, if that's all you got then we got work to do." He turned his grin onto Midoriya who managed a shaky, strained smile. "Alright, kiddo, let's focus on getting your feet back to earth, kay?"

"O-okay."

Shouta glanced back at Yagi and Nedzu, tilting his head towards the exit. Nedzu picked up on his subtle plea and smiled, clapping his paws together. "Yagi-kun, perhaps the two of us should spend some time researching the past holders of One for All while Aizawa-kun and Yamada-kun help Midoriya-kun here. We can get a plan together for other quirks manifesting so we don't have any nasty accidents. My, it *is* lucky that this happened in a controlled environment! Can you imagine if something like this had happened during an exercise? Or the Provisional exam?"

Oh right. The Provisional exam was coming up in a few weeks. And now Shouta had the difficult question of whether or not Midoriya

should be allowed to participate in the exam with a quirk that just manifested that he didn't understand. One that he couldn't control.

He already knew the answer to that question. He also knew that the kid in question wouldn't like the answer.

Yagi blanched, glancing towards Midoriya reluctantly. "Ah, shouldn't I stay here? And help? I did want to speak to young Midoriya-" He jumped at a sudden slam, all four adults turning towards the entrance of the gym and the sound of pounding footsteps. Uraraka and Todoroki skidded into the gym, Uraraka's body tense and ready while Todoroki had a small ball of fire and ice in each hand. Both looked ready to fight. And both froze as the took in what was happening.

Todoroki blinked slowly, lowering his hands to his sides and the two elements dying away. ". . . Izu-chan, why didn't you tell me you could fly?"

Shouta sighed and threw his head back. *Fucking Tuesdays*.

"To be fair," Izuku muttered, carefully not looking at Yagi, "I didn't exactly know that I could do it until today."

Shouta pinched the bridge of his nose. Okay, there were too many people in this damn room right now. "Uraraka, Todoroki, Midoriya has had a sudden mutation in his Quirk. Uraraka, we're hoping that you'll be able to help and Todoroki," he narrowed his eyes meaningfully, "I expect that you'll be able to help since you're so *close* with Midoriya."

There was a pause where Todoroki slowly tilted his head, understanding flashing across his face briefly before his expression smoothed out and he nodded calmly. "Of course, Aizawa-sensei."

Shouta nodded firmly, ignoring Uraraka's confused look aimed at Todoroki, and turned to Yagi and Nedzu. "Nedzu-san, Yagi-kun, you were leaving to go research possible reasons for this mutation?"

Yagi opened his mouth as if to disagree, but Nedzu was already taking his hand and speaking in a cheery but firm tone. "Of course, Aizawa-kun! We'll leave you to it! Come, Yagi-kun, we have much research to do! And much to talk about as well!" The small, three-foot mammal pulled hard and the seven-foot-tall former hero was helpless to do anything but trail after him, sending Midoriya a look that the boy firmly ignored as he left.

No one said anything until they heard the quiet click of the gym door. And then Hizashi grinned. “Alrighty! So, let’s Midoriya back on solid ground, yeah!?”

“Izuku told me that you know about One for All.”

Shouta looked away from where he was watching Uraraka and Midoriya both floating above gym mats, Hizashi there just a foot away as they talked. Midoriya had been able to touch ground after about an hour of trying and a helpful comment from Uraraka about imagine being weighed down. Now they were working on remaining floating in one spot instead of floating into the atmosphere. Shouta was leaning against the wall, ready to use his quirk or capture weapon at any moment. He glanced to his left to where Todoroki was, leaning against the wall with a neutral expression on his face as he watched his friends. “I do,” Shouta confirmed with a tilt of his head. “He told me just before you.”

Todoroki hummed. His fingers were tapping calmly against his forearm. Shouta was a little surprised that he was here talking to him instead of pressed against Midoriya’s side as a protective force. But the kid seemed like he had something to say so Shouta waited patiently, keeping his gaze locked onto Midoriya as he bobbed in the air. With Todoroki, Shouta had mastered the art of waiting patiently.

Shouta wasn’t stupid. He knew there was something wrong with Todoroki. The way he walked into the school with an ice cold demeaner, the way he refused to use his fire, the way he clung to Midoriya after knowing him for only a few short weeks. The way that his expression went blank whenever he saw Endeavour on live TV and the way Midoriya’s lips pressed into thin lines and held Todoroki’s hands until the channel was switched. He *knew* there was something wrong. But Endeavour was the Number One hero and Shouta – an unranked, mostly unknown Underground hero – would have no sway to do anything. Even Yuuei itself saying something would do nothing, not with the Hero Commission in Endeavour’s back pocket. There was little to nothing that they could do.

But he had brought his suspicions to Nedzu all the same. They worked extra training after school training into Todoroki’s schedule on the days that Endeavour would be there. Shouta encouraged the friendship between Midoriya and Todoroki. He made it clear to Todoroki that Shouta was there for him if he ever needed anything.

They rushed the building of the dorms. And Todoroki was safe for now. Safe as Nedzu devoted several hours into searching for ways to bring the Number two, now Number One, hero to the ground and to make sure that Todoroki would be safe forever.

But that required waiting. So, yeah. Shouta had gotten very good at waiting patiently.

Finally, Todoroki spoke. “He told me about him growing up Quirkless. About how he took the quirk thinking that it was the only way he could’ve become a hero.” He tilted his head. “I think the way All Might gave him the quirk was similar to a back ally drug deal.”

It took all of Shouta’s power of will not to snort.

Instead, he silently nodded and waited for Todoroki to continue.

“There’s never been a Quirkless hero before. But Izuku told me about the entrance exam everyone took. About the rescue points. And he has a theory that there are several other ways to gain points too besides just those two.”

Shouta arched an eyebrow, carefully not giving anything away. He was right. Just like there were several different kinds of heroics, there were several different ways to gain points in the entrance exam. Sneaking weapons in was one. It was how Shinsou had managed to scrape together about a dozen points, by sneaking in a small switchblade by tucking it in his shoe, and what had initially turned Shouta’s eye to him. But those ways were guarded carefully, even more carefully than the rescue points were. Gaining those points took skill, cunning, and everything else looked for in an Underground hero. “And?”

Todoroki met his eyes head on, firm and resolute in what he was about to say. “Izuku would’ve been the first. He would’ve passed the entrance exam and you would’ve had the first Quirkless kid in your class. If All Might hadn’t given him the quirk, hadn’t said what he had said that made him believe he *needed* it, he still would’ve been in your class.” Todoroki’s lips twisted into a dangerous frown. “But what I want to know is if you would’ve expelled him on the first day.”

There was a beat of silence where Shouta just stared at Todoroki. Finally, he spoke in a soft, slightly warning voice. “What?”

“The Quirk Assessment Test. Would you have made Izuku participate?”

Shouta didn't even have to think about the question before nodding. He had already made this decision years ago when Quirkless kids were first allowed into Yuuei. "Yes."

Todoroki's eyes narrowed. "So, he *would* have been expelled. You would've expelled him before he got a chance to prove himself."

Shouta didn't even bother to hide the eyeroll. He sighed and shook his head. "You're giving him too little credit," he chided. "What did I say at the start of every single test? That anything was allowed. *Anything.* I wasn't grading raw power, unlike what some might think. I was grading your creativity, determination, and cleverness. I've had kids in my class before that had Quirks that didn't do anything that could've helped them in any of the tests, but they passed. If Midoriya had shown the same creativity, determination, and cleverness that he does every single day then he would've been fine." He poked Todoroki firmly in the chest. "*You* were at more of a danger of being expelled from heroics that day then a Quirkless Midoriya would've been."

Todoroki's eyes widened slightly. "I scored high."

"Using half your power. You were half assing it. But I saw potential, so I kept you." Shouta retracted his hand and relaxed back against the wall. "I'm glad I did. You've grown since then and you're going to keep growing. But thinking that Midoriya would've failed the Assessment Test is foolish. He would've been fine."

The Assessment Test wasn't there to grade how powerful his students were. If it was then Shouta himself never would pass it. It was there to see if they anything in their heads other than pure muscle. If a Quirkless kid took that test and showed willpower, determination, and cleverness than there was no reason that they couldn't pass.

Todoroki stared at him for a long moment before nodding and relaxing back against the wall. ". . . My brother Natsuo is Quirkless."

That sudden declaration was enough to make Shouta's eyebrows shoot up. "I didn't know that." Endeavour having a Quirkless son? It would've been in the headlines for years. How the hell did Endeavour manage to keep that a secret?

"No one knows. Father made up a lie about him having an invisible quirk." Todoroki's frown turned thoughtful. "I think . . . Temperature Resistance. That's the Quirk Father made up for him. He said that he's able to withstand the most drastic of temperatures." A

believable lie with both Endeavour and his wife's quirks. "It's a lie. Natsuo is a baseline Human, the same as Izuku once was." His expression hardened. "I'm tired of having people in my life having to hide who they are because they're what Humans were for millions of years. It's not fair."

Fair. As a rule, Shouta didn't really bother with the concept of *fairness.* Fairness didn't have a place in the world they lived in. If life was fair, then discrimination wouldn't be a thing. Shouta and Shinsou would've gotten into the Hero course without having to claw their way up from the bottom. If life was fair, then Oboro would be alive right now and sitting in a cloud next to Midoriya, chatting his ear off on how much fun flying was.

Life wasn't fair. Life was a stone-cold bitch who liked to spit in your eye and kick your feet out from under you.

But he remembered what if was like being Todoroki's age. Bitter and angry about how life wasn't fair. So, he said what he wished someone had said to him back then. "Life isn't fair. It never will be. But we can make it as fair as possible."

"*How?"* Todoroki had never sounded so helpless.

"You're lucky, Todoroki. You have the privilege of having a very powerful Quirk that everyone fawns over." Shouta met his eyes firmly. "Use that. If you want to change the world then use that privilege to make people listen to you. Change is slow but if you want the world to be fair then it's up to you to lead the change. Midoriya will being the same thing, I'm sure, with the quirk he received. Will you?"

Todoroki didn't answer but the fire burning in his eyes told Shouta everything he needed to know.

"Alright, kiddo! Remember, you text me and your sensei immediately if you start floating and just remember those techniques we figured out to keep you in one spot. But stay inside for the rest of the day anyway, 'kay? I'll talk to your Quirk Counsellor, and we'll figure out a training regimen out."

Midoriya nodded enthusiastically. He was standing in the doorway of Heights Alliance with Todoroki and Uraraka's hands held firmly in his own. Shouta stood behind Hizashi, letting his husband take the reins on the final instructions for Midoriya. They had

managed the walk from the gym back to the dorms without incident and Midoriya didn't seem like he was going to be floating away any time soon. But still. It would be better to keep a roof over Midoriya's head until he could control it enough to stop himself from flying away. "Yes, Yamada-sensei. I'll stay inside, I promise. And is it okay if I meditate maybe? I'll text you right away if I start floating!"

Hizashi grinned and pointed at the kid with finger guns. "Sure thing, Little Listener. Just keep someone with you while you do it, you dig? Best to do it right before bed. Helps you sleep. But we'll leave you to it for now."

Thank God. The day was almost over. Tuesday was almost over. Thank *God.*

Shouta sighed and shook his head. "Midoriya, tomorrow you'll be working with me one on one instead of doing practical heroics. And you still have your Quirk Counselling tomorrow. The sooner we can get this under control, the better." He gave Todoroki and Uraraka stern looks. "*Please* try and keep Midoriya's feet planted on the ground. And text us if they come off of it." He nodded approvingly at his students' quick nods and jerked his head back in the direction of the teachers' dorms. "Come on, Yamada."

"Have a good rest of the day, Yamada-sensei! You too, Aizawa-sensei!"

Shouta waved over his shoulder dismissively, already turned around and trudging down the path. But he kept an ear out and only relaxed when he heard the quiet click of the dorm's door being closed. He sighed in relief, pinching the bridge of his nose as Hizashi jogged up to his side. "Seven fucking quirks," he muttered in annoyance. "Problem Child is going to have access to fucking *seven* quirks."

"Yeah, it's pretty much worse case scenario," Hizashi agreed, gently knocking his shoulder against Shouta's. "Gotta say though. Float is probably gonna be the easiest for us to deal with. If I know your kids, which I do, then it could've been worse. It could've been a mutation quirk. That would've been difficult to explain away."

Oh, fucking hell, that would've been a headache and a half if Midoriya had suddenly developed a visible mutation. Just thinking about all the press conferences that would've taken place made Shouta's skin crawl. He should probably start thinking of ways to deal with it just in case. "On the list of quirks that would've been annoying

to handle right now, a flight quirk is not that high," he agreed with a sigh. He bumped his hand against Hizashi who dutifully linked pinkies with him, like he had been doing since their first year of high school. Shouta would say many things about high school Hizashi, but being a coward was not one of them. To link pinkies with bristly, snappy fourteen-year-old Shouta? He had been the bravest person alive, even back then.

Shouta sighed, rubbing his free hand into his eyes as they walked. "This is going to complicate things. Midoriya made leaps with the first quirk that he got. Mastered it pretty fucking quickly too. And I have no doubt that he'll master this one, Float, quickly too. But . . ."

"But," Hizashi said, picking up Shouta's train of thought. "You don't want to rush him. And that means that you're against him doing the Provisional exam." He shrugged. "Doesn't sound too outlandish to me."

And it wasn't. Shouta didn't put kids in positions where they'd fail. Positions that they weren't ready for. It was cruel and taught them nothing. What would making Midoriya do the Provisional exams teach him except that he didn't have full control of Float yet? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. So, yes, Shouta was against it. And maybe Midoriya would be angry with him for it. But even if he passed, he wouldn't be working with his full set of abilities. And Shouta wasn't teaching these kids to pass a test. He was teaching them to be heroes and how to survive in the field. And Midoriya falling and cracking his head against the ground would be nothing but detrimental to that.

So Shouta nodded. "Exactly. He won't be the only one. Shinsou isn't ready for the exam either. Both of them will be sitting out and doing the exam at a later date. They can come and watch but that's it." He'd have to be careful with explaining that to Midoriya. But he would.

Hizashi sighed and gave his pinky a gentle squeeze. "You gonna tell them tomorrow?"

"The sooner the better."

"They won't be happy."

Shouta sighed. "I know. But can you honestly tell me that Midoriya will be ready to take that exam in two and a half weeks' time, 'Zashi?"

Hizashi grinned and shrugged. “I wouldn’t count them out. Give them two weeks, both of them. Shinsou’s a quick learner and this wouldn’t be the first time Midoriya thrived under pressure. Give them until the exam and if they’re still not ready then that’s that. They can wait. But give them a chance, Shouchan.”

Shouta hesitated for a long moment. It wasn’t like he didn’t want them to take the test. Shinsou and Midoriya were both capable young men. Could they pass the exam? Maybe? But Shouta wanted them to have the best possible chance. He knew if they failed then both Midoriya and Shinsou’s confidence would take a massive hit. But if they were ready by the date of the exam . . . “Two weeks. I’ll assess them both then and if they’re not ready then they’ll sit out.”

Hizashi grinned and gave another squeeze of his pinky before pulling away. “Rocking. I’ll work with Midoriya on controlling his floating and you can get Shinsou up to speed with everything else.” He grinned at him wickedly. “Maybe they’ll do what you did in our Provisional exams. Do some sneaky spy shit and take out about ten people all at once.”

A slow smirk grew on Shouta’s face. Ah. Right. He had nearly forgotten how he had taken out nearly half of an entire class from another school at once. That was a nice memory. Full of shrieks and even one student pissing their pants from the sheer terror of fifth teen year old Shouta jumping down on their chest with glowing red eyes and a terrifying grin on his face. “I can see Shinsou doing that. Maybe Midoriya. He’ll probably go for the more obvious route, but he’d be good at the sneaky route as well.” God, just the idea of Midoriya floating above unsuspecting kids’ heads with a grin exactly like Shouta and Shinsou’s was almost enough to make Shouta laugh out loud. “Either way, this is a big *if.”*

“I hear ya, I hear ya! Big if!” Hizashi paused and pulled out his phone, grinning at what he saw on the screen. He leaned closer to Shouta and showed off the webpage he was on. “Let’s not focus on that for now. Let’s focus instead on the fact that I am the greatest husband ever.”

Hizashi *was* the greatest husband ever. Because in the webpage was a notice that two extra-large bags of Shouta’s Italian coffee and two boxes of coffee flavoured chocolate were two hours away.

Shouta whipped his head around to stare at Hizashi with wide eyes who gave a sheepish smile in return. “I *might’ve* called in a favour

or two. Also, might've told the company that I'd do a promotion or two for them on my radio show if they did me this small favour of rushing this for me."

For the first time in a while, Shouta was tempted to pull Hizashi into a kiss right out in front of the teachers' dorms and damn anyone who saw them. Instead, he leaned forward with a grin that his students found terrifying and one that his husband found adorable. "I," he said in a low voice, "fucking love you. But two hours is a long time. We could get a *lot* done in two hours."

Hizashi grinned just as wickedly as Shouta and winked. "Knew I married you for your mind, babe."

Best. Husband. Ever.

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